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volley fired at ten yards distance, the cuirassiers used every effort of the most determined valour to throw those immoveable phalanxes into disorder. As if reckless of life, they galloped up to the very bayonets, cut at the soldiers over their muskets, and fired their pistols at the officers. Others rode at random between the squares, and were mowed down by the crossing fires, or by repeated attacks of the British cavalry, who rushed at intervals from the rear, and carried havoc through the enemy's ranks; while those squadrons which, less daring, stood at gaze, were swept off in hundreds by the British artillery, which was never in higher order, or more distinguished for excellent practice, than on this memorable day. Still undismayed, fresh squadrons of the enemy pressed on with desperate courage, or if the cavalry attacks were suspended for a moment, it was only to give place to the operations of their celebrated artillery, which, at one hundred yards distance, played on the British squares with the most destructive execution. The cuirassiers, meantime, waited like birds of prey, to dash at any point where the slaughter should make the slightest opening; but their intrepid

opponents, closing their files with steady composure over the bodies of their dead and dying comrades, still presented to their view that compact array of battle, which rendered every new effort to disorder it abortive. During the interval of the cavalry attacks, the squares sought protection from the murderous effects of the French artillery, by deploying into a line four deep, and lying on the ground; but in many instances they had scarcely time to perform this evolution, when they were again called upon to re-form square, to oppose fresh charges. The promptitude and coolness with which these manœuvres were executed, at length convinced the enemy of the rashness of their enterprise, and the battle slackened in this quarter to rage with greater fury on other points of the line. The right continued still exposed to a severe cannonade, but the interval of comparative tranquillity was seized to reinforce with six companies of the Guards, under Colonel Hepburn, the brave garrison of Hougoumont, which succeeded in driving back Foy's division, and regaining possession of the wood.



DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

Defeated in his object of turning the right wing, and establishing himself on the road to Nivelles, Napoleon now organized the whole of his forces for a combined attack, with all arms, on the centre and left of the British position, which, if successful, would cut it in two, separate the British army from that of the Prussians, and make him master of the road to Brussels. Preceded by the fire of their immense artillery and numerous sharp-shooters, vast columns of infantry and cavalry were seen moving across the plain to charge on different points at the same moment; and while a strong body advanced to the attack of La Haye Sainte, the key of the British centre, which they speedily invested, another pressed on towards the heights of Mont St. Jean, and a third moved on Ter la Haye to the left of the position, where the 5th and 6th British divisions were posted, with some Belgians, and a brigade of heavy dragoons, under the command of Sir Thomas Picton. The mode of attack on this point was of the

most tremendous description, and was intended on the part of the French, to be a battle of cavalry and cannon. Headed by the iron-clad cuirassiers, on whose mail the musket-balls were heard to ring as they glanced off without injuring the wearers, the French infantry ascended the heights where the remnant of Pack's gallant brigade (the Royal Scots, 42d, 44th, and 92d regiments) were posted. Some Belgian troops were forced to give way before the rapid onset of the enemy; but the Duke of Wellington, who happened to be in that part of the field, moved up the British brigade to a kind of natural embrazure, formed by a hedge and bank in front of the line, and from thence the brave Highlanders and their comrade regiments gave the enemy a reception similar to that which they had experienced from the Guards and Brunswickers on the right. Sir Thomas Picton now advanced to support this corps with Sir James Kempt's brigade, composed of the 28th, 32d, 79th, and 95th regiments. Vast masses of French

infantry had arrived at this time behind the very hedge where the British were posted—their muskets were almost muzzle to muzzle, and a French mounted officer attempted to seize the colours of the 32d, when General Picton suddenly resolved on becoming the assailant, and promptly forming his division into squares, he rushed through the hedge, and attacked the advancing columns of infantry and cavalry with charged bayonets. Appalled by this almost unparalleled act of intrepidity, the enemy hesitated, fired a volley, and fled; but that volley proved fatal to one of the noblest commanders of whom the British army could boast. A musket-ball struck the right temple of the gallant Picton, which went through the brain, and in a moment numbered him with the dead. But notwithstanding this disastrous event, the division maintained its irresistible charge under the conduct of Sir James Kempt, till they repulsed the enemy from the crest of the hill, to which they had nearly attained.

Before the French had time to recover from the effects of this furious attack, a brigade of heavy British dragoons, commanded by Sir William Ponsonby, wheeled round the extremity of the cross-road, full on the flank of the foe. It was composed of the Royals, Greys, and Enniskillens—England, Scotland, and Ireland, in high rivalry, and irresistible union. The 92d Highlanders, (now reduced to two hundred men,) had at this moment pierced the centre of a column of French infantry of as many thousands, and the Greys dashing in at the opening, the two regiments cheered each other, shouting "Scotland for ever!" The cuirassiers and lancers now advanced to save their infantry, and the Greys being reinforced by the Royals and Enniskillen dragoons, one of the most dreadful cavalry engagements recorded in the history of modern warfare ensued. The far-famed cuirassiers maintained a long and murderous struggle against the British dragoons, in which some extraordinary feats of dexterity and courage were displayed. The impenetrable armour of the French, gave them a decided advantage over their antagonists, who could only strike at their necks or limbs. But after numbers of them were cut down, they were at length forced to yield to the determined valour and superior strength of the British men and horses. The cuirassiers and lancers fled in confusion, abandoning their artillery and infantry, while nearly three thousand prisoners, two eagles, and several pieces of cannon, rewarded the prowess of the victors.

The exultation which the success of this gallant brigade was calculated to inspire, received a severe check by the fall of their intrepid leader, Sir William Ponsonby.

Napoleon, from his commanding station near La Belle Alliance, viewed the progress of this mighty struggle, and the valorous but fruitless efforts which his devoted followers were making to secure the victory. The intrepid conduct of the British is said to have frequently called forth his eulogiums, and observing how the chasms were filled up the instant they were made by the French artillery, he exclaimed to Soult, his Lieutenant-General, "*Quelles braves troupes ! comme ils travaillent ! tres-bien !*"—"What brave troops ! how they go through their work ! admirable ! admirable !" adding, "but they must give way !" "No, Sir !" replied Soult, "they prefer being cut to pieces." To the intelligence of every fresh repulse, his only reply was, "*Avant ! Avant !*"—"Forward ! Forward !" Acting on this principle, the defeat of his troops on the right and left, led him to adopt the most desperate efforts to break through the centre, in front of which La Haye Sainte was still vigorously defended by the Hanoverian light troops. At each end of the court-yard of this farm-house, stood a large door or gate, through which the besiegers and besieged fired at each other with dreadful effect. When the last cartridge of the Hanoverians was expended, they kept up an unequal contest with their swords and bayonets through the windows and embrasures, till the increasing numbers of the enemy enabled them to storm the farm-house ; but the resistance of the gallant Germans did not cease till nearly their last man had ceased to breathe, and the whole building presented a scene of shattered ruin, which could not be looked upon without a degree of interest truly terrific.

The French had for some hours kept up a violent can-

nonade on the centre of the British line, but now having established a post on the causeway, Napoleon ordered his generals to direct their main force against that part of the British position which had become exposed. The troops posted in this direction resisted for hours the varied attacks of the enemy's cavalry and artillery, and a somewhat particular description of the kind of conflict sustained by a square composed of the 30th and 73d, commanded by Sir Colin Halket, may afford some idea of this extraordinary species of combat. To no square did the French artillery and cuirassiers pay more frequent visits, so that the soldiers began almost to recognize the faces of those messengers of death. Sometimes they galloped up to the very points of the bayonet ; at other times, confiding in their armour, they fearlessly walked their horses round this bulwark of steel, that they should have more time to seek some chasm in the ranks at which they might rush in. General Halket, perceiving that the balls made little impression on those mail-clad men, ordered the soldiers to aim at the horses, as when the horse was brought down, the rider uniformly became a prisoner. By the imperturbable constancy of these two gallant corps, the cuirassiers were repeatedly driven off, and upon each of these occasions line was promptly formed to give the flying foe a more effective volley, or to render the enemy's artillery less destructive to themselves. When again the storm was seen gathering and rolling on, the command to re-form square, prepare to receive cavalry, was promptly and accurately obeyed. In a moment the whole were prostrate on their breasts, to let the iron shower fly over, and they were erect in an instant, when the cannon ceased and the cavalry charged. At one period of the combat, the commander of the cuirassiers attempted to throw this invincible phalanx off their guard by a *ruse-de-guerre*, by lowering his sword to Sir Colin Halket, and several of the officers cried out, "Sir, they surrender." But the British general, justly suspecting that a body of well-mounted cavalry would not surrender to a corps fixed to the spot in a defensive position, made no other reply than, "Be firm—fire;" and the volley put the colonel and his cuirassiers to flight, with a laugh of derision from the men he meant to cut in pieces. The Duke of Wellington paid frequent visits to this distinguished square. Upon one of these occasions he inquired, "How they were?" Their commander replied, that nearly two-thirds of their number had fallen, and the rest were so exhausted, that it might be attended with advantage if one of the foreign corps who had not suffered would take their station even for a short time. The reply of the Duke was, "It is impossible ! the issue of the battle depends on the unflinching front of the British troops ; you and I and every Englishman in the field must die on the spot we now occupy." "Enough, my Lord," said Sir Colin Halket, "we stand here till the last man falls." And, though himself severely wounded, this brave man would no doubt have kept his word, had not the British cavalry soon flown to his relief.*

The Duke of Wellington now felt that the critical situation of affairs called for all his energies, and they were exerted with decisive effect. Many of his short but encouraging phrases had a talismanic effect on the men. Riding up to the 95th, when in front of the line, awaiting a formidable charge of cavalry, he exclaimed "Stand fast, 95th—we must not be beat—what will they say in England?" To another regiment, when fiercely engaged, he said, "Hard pounding, this, gentlemen ; let's see who will pound longest. Never mind, we'll win this battle yet."

* Mr. Simpson, in his "Visit to Flanders," relates the following instance of individual heroism :—"General Halket had a brother in the field, who was colonel of a Hanoverian corps. A trait of heroism is related of him, which has few examples in modern warfare, and is not excelled by the far-famed achievement of Robert Bruce, in his short combat with Sir Henry Bohun, in that memorable battle which stood foremost on history's brightest page, until Waterloo was fought. A French general was giving his orders with great confidence to a large body of troops, and had come to their front unattended. Colonel Halket made a dash at him at full gallop ; and putting a pistol to his breast, seized his horse's reins, and brought him from the very beards of his wonder-struck soldiers."

The security of the British line became at this time extremely critical; several of the regiments having no longer a sufficient number of men left to form square, were obliged to receive the cavalry in line, in order to cover the necessary space of ground. A close column of French infantry now pressed forward to carry the village of Mont St. Jean in the rear of the British centre: some gallant charges from the British and German hussars and light dragoons, threw the advancing column into disorder. The hussars displayed their usual courage, but notwithstanding the heroic exertions of the Earl of Uxbridge, their light blood horses were forced to give way before the ponderous rush of the cuirassiers; and some of the light regiments suffered considerably on this occasion. At this critical moment, the household brigade, composed of the Life Guards, Oxford Blues, and 1st Dragoon Guards, led on by Sir John Eiley, at his own request, made a charge on the French cavalry, which was productive of the most tremendous effects. The weight and armour of the cuirassiers proved ineffectual against the shock of this splendid and irresistible brigade—they were literally ridden down upon the field—hundreds were driven headlong into a quarry or gravel pit, where they rolled a confused and undistinguishable mass of men and horses, till the fire of the cavalry and artillery put a period to their sufferings. Those who for some time stood their ground proved also the superior strength of the British soldiers, with whom they fought hand to hand. A corporal of the Life Guards, named Shaw, well known as a pugilist, and equally formidable as a swordsman, slew or disabled ten of the cuirassiers with his own hand, before he was killed by a musket or pistol shot. The officers as well as the men of this heroic band, were closely engaged in individual combat with the enemy. Sir John Eiley, who was remarkable for his strength, his horsemanship, and skill in the use of his sword, performed feats of valour that would have done honour to the days of chivalry, and being at one period of the combat surrounded by six or seven cuirassiers, he, though severely wounded, cut his way through them, leaving three or four of his assailants dead behind him, their wounds bearing striking indications of the unusual strength of the arm which inflicted them. Colonel Ferrier of the 1st Life Guards fell on this memorable occasion. He had led his regiment to the charge no less than eleven times; and most of the charges were not made till after his head had been laid open by the cut of a sabre, and his body was pierced with a lance. Major Pack, of the Royal Horse Guards, was also particularly distinguished. He had been among the first to dash into the ranks of the enemy, and he and his opponent having dismounted each other, he mounted on a troop-horse, and in the second charge led his squadron against a column of cuirassiers. He killed the officer commanding the column, but he himself was the next moment run through the body, and numbered with the slain. Colonel Fuller, and Major Bringhurst of the 1st Dragoon Guards, met a similar fate. The results of this brilliant charge were most important—the enemy were driven in confusion from the heights, with the loss of 1200 prisoners, and great numbers killed; and the gallant victors followed up their success till the farm of La Haye Sainte was retaken, and the British again re-established in the positions which they occupied before the attack. The Duke of Wellington could with difficulty restrain the impetuosity of his troops, who, after standing for so many hours exposed to the most furious charges, now eagerly demanded to be led against the enemy. "Not yet, not yet, my brave fellows!" was the Duke's reply: "be firm a little longer—you shall have at them by and by."

Indeed the patience of the illustrious chief, as well as that of his heroic followers, must have been put to the severest test. The combat had continued for six hours with unabated fury, and one-fourth of the allied troops were killed or wounded, while the remainder were worn out with fatigue, and destitute of the smallest refreshment. It would be impossible, under such circumstances, but that the spirits of the men must droop. In fact, during the intervals of the cavalry attacks, while the French artillery was spreading havoc in the British ranks, an indifference to life seemed spreading fast among the soldiery, though on the near approach of the enemy, they became as alert

as ever. Yet Lord Wellington remained cool, and apparently cheerful, determined to maintain the contest while one regiment continued firm at its post. An aid-de-camp coming up with the intelligence that the 5th and 6th divisions, who were posted on the left, were nearly destroyed, and that it was utterly impossible that they could maintain their ground—"I cannot help it," said he, "they must keep their ground: would to God that Blücher or night were come!"

While the battle was thus raging in the centre, the 2d corps under Prince Jerome, had renewed their attacks upon the right wing. The post of Hougomont, which had received repeated reinforcements from the division of Guards, had never ceased to be the object of the most desperate assaults; but its brave garrison maintained it to the last, and the loss of the French, in this attack alone, is estimated at 10,000 men. In the early part of the action, the extreme right, consisting of the 2d and 4th divisions, was protected by deep ravines from the charges of the enemy; but Sir Frederick Adam's brigade of the 2d, composed of the 52d, 71st, and a battalion of the 95th, who were close to the right of the centre, were for two hours exposed to a dreadful fire of artillery, without being able to discharge a musket at the enemy. This brigade had only joined the army the preceding evening, and were so exhausted after a fatiguing march of two days, that the continued roar of cannon and bursting of shells was not sufficient to prevent several of the men from falling asleep, in which state many fell victims to the cannon balls which flew thickly around them. At length the French lancers made a dash at some artillery in their rear. The brigade were instantly on their feet, formed square, and repelled the enemy. The latter returned again and again to the charge, but, aided by the 15th light dragoons, who came up to their assistance, under Colonel Boyce, the brigade finally succeeded in putting them to the route.

It was now five o'clock, and the British, though dreadfully weakened, still gallantly maintained their position at every point—but some movements on the enemy's right, now began to indicate that they were about to be supported in the unequal contest by their Prussian allies, whose arrival had been so long and so ardently expected. In fact, General Bülow, with two brigades of infantry and a corps of cavalry, was then defiling by Ohain, in the rear of the French army, after having encountered extraordinary difficulties in their passage through the woods of St. Lambert. But while Napoleon continued the main conflict against the British position, he opposed to this new enemy the 6th corps, under Count Lobau, and an engagement was immediately commenced in this quarter, but with little energy, as Bülow did not wish to undertake any thing serious till the arrival of Marshal Blücher.

It is thought, that Napoleon, as a prudent general, should at this moment have discontinued the action, the whole of the Imperial Guard being still in reserve, who, considering the exhausted state of the British, would have been more than sufficient to cover his retreat on the Dyle and Sambre. But his recollection of the day of Marengo, where his reiterated efforts, after the battle had been to all appearance lost, secured him the victory, led him to hope for a similar triumph on this occasion, as on it alone rested his hopes of uniting the French nation in support of his throne. After reflecting for some moments on his critical situation, he determined again to attack the weakest part of the British line in great force; hoping to carry it before the remainder of the Prussians could arrive. He accordingly brought forward the whole of the cavalry of his guard, and directed it, supported by fresh masses of infantry, on the centre of the position. Their first shock was irresistible; they ascended the heights, and thirty pieces of cannon fell into their power. But the presence of the Duke of Wellington quickly averted the dangers which now menaced the British army. Placing himself at the head of the three battalions of English, and three of Brunswickers, he addressed them in a few animating sentences, and then led them against the enemy, who were now proudly advancing to the very rear of his lines. In a moment victory was rescued from their grasp, they abandoned the artillery which they had taken, and fled with precipitation.

During this conflict in the centre, Count Lobau had repulsed Bulow's advanced guard, and driven them again into the woods; and Napoleon expressed the strongest confidence that Grouchy was moving in the same line with the Prussians, and would shortly arrive to his assistance. He therefore resolved to persevere in his exertions to carry the British position, notwithstanding the immense sacrifice of lives which was the consequence of every fresh attack; and so certain was he of success, even at this advanced period of the battle, that he ordered his secretary to send an express to Paris, saying, that the victory was his. About seven o'clock it was announced to him, that powerful bodies of Prussians were opening from the woods near Frischermont on his right flank, and threatening his rear, but he treated the aid-de-camp who brought the intelligence with contempt. "Be off," said he, "you are frightened; ride up to the columns that are deploying, and you will find that they are Grouchy's." All who obeyed his command were killed or taken, and he was made sensible of his error, when the Prussians commenced an attack on his right wing. He still, however, believed that Grouchy must be as near to support, as this new enemy was to attack him, and he caused General Labedoyere to circulate this opinion amongst the troops, with whom he now resolved to make a last grand effort. Having detached the whole of the reserves of the 6th corps, and the Young Guard, with 100 pieces of cannon, against the Prussians, he brought forward fifteen thousand of the Imperial Guard, who remaining on the ridge of La Belle Alliance, or behind it, had scarcely yet drawn a trigger in the action. He placed himself at the head of these celebrated troops, descended the hill, and led them till he reached a ravine, half way between La Belle Alliance and La Haye Sainte, where he was protected from the fire of the British artillery. Here his veteran guards defiled before him for the last time. Led on by Marshal Ney, this noble column then pressed on with loud shouts, and the clang of warlike music, over ground covered with heaps of slain, and slippery with blood; rallying in their progress such of the broken cavalry and infantry of the line, as still maintained the combat. Such was the clamour, that the British believed that Napoleon himself would be the leader in this new attack; but they were not unprepared to meet it. The Duke of Wellington had not failed to improve the advantage which the repeated repulses of the enemy had given him. The extreme right of the line under Lord Hill, had gradually gained ground after each unsuccessful charge on the right of the centre, until the space between Hougomont and Braine-la-Leude being completely cleared of the enemy, this wing, with its artillery and sharpshooters, was brought round from a convex to a concave position, so that their guns raked the enemy as they debouched upon the causeway. The service of the British artillery upon this occasion was so accurate and destructive, that the heads of the French columns were enfiladed and almost annihilated before they could reach the high road, so that they seemed for a considerable time advancing from the hollow way, without gaining ground on the plain. The enthusiasm of the Imperial Guard, however, enabled them to overcome this obstacle, as well as a charge of the gallant Brunswickers, which they repelled with considerable slaughter. They rushed up the heights with great spirit, at a point where the British Guards lay prostrate in a hollow, to avoid the destructive fire of the French artillery, by which the assault was covered. The Duke of Wellington had placed himself on a ridge behind them, declaring that he would never quit it but in triumph; and as soon as the Imperial Guard had approached within one hundred yards, he suddenly exclaimed, "Up, Guards, and at them!" The French battalions appeared startled for a moment at the unexpected apparition of this fine body of men, who were drawn up in line four deep: but the French veterans soon recovering their composure, advanced at the charge step, their artillery filing off to the right and left, till they were within twenty yards of their opponents, and on the point of dashing at them with their bayonets, when a volley was poured upon them by the British, which literally drove them back with its shock: a second volley increased their confusion, and before they had time to deploy or manœuvre, the Bri-

tish cheered, and charged them with an effect that proved irresistible. The Duke himself at this crisis brought up General Adam's brigade, and completed the route of the enemy. A regiment of tirailleurs attempted to cover their retreat, and attack the pursuers, but they fled from the very cheers of the British. The Old Guard had still preserved their squares, but they were now charged by the British cavalry, forced, and almost entirely cut to pieces, and their leader, General Cambrone, was taken prisoner.

Napoleon beheld, from his station in the ravine, the rout of his chosen troops. He talked of rallying them to make another effort, still persisting that Grouchy was at hand; but from this he was dissuaded by Bertrand and Drouet, who represented to him how much the fate of France and of the army depended on his life. Hitherto he had shown the greatest coolness and indifference throughout this eventful day; but when he observed his celebrated guards recoil in disorder, the cavalry intermingled with the foot, and trampling them down, he said to his attendants, "*Il sont mêlés ensemble*," (they are mixed together,) shook his head, and retired to his former station on the heights of Belle Alliance, and on the advance of the British line, he exclaimed, "*A présent c'est fini—sauvons nous*." (It is over for the present—let us save ourselves.) He instantly left the field of battle, at about half past eight o'clock, accompanied by five or six of his officers, and galloped along the road to Genappe. No other course but flight now remained for him, in order to escape death or captivity.

The Duke of Wellington had hitherto suffered no prospect of advantage to withdraw him from his position; but now the decisive moment was come for bringing this dreadful conflict to a termination. The acuteness of his sight enabled him to perceive the advance of the Prussians in great force on the enemy's right flank, while the ruinous disorder in which the French fled before the British Guards declared them past the power of rallying. He therefore determined to become the assailant in his turn. He ordered his whole army to advance to the charge, the centre formed in line four deep, and the battalions on the flanks in squares for their security; the Duke himself, with his hat in his hand, leading the whole line, which was supported by the cavalry and artillery. This movement is represented as having been one of the finest military spectacles ever witnessed; and could it have been viewed apart from the scene of carnage which the field exhibited in every quarter, must have excited an indescribable glow of triumph in the bosoms of the gallant troops, who for so many hours had maintained with unwavering constancy the unequal contest. The setting sun, which through the sanguinary day had been veiled in clouds, now burst forth for a moment from its obscurity, and darted a cheering ray on the British columns as they rushed down the slopes, and crossed the plain which separated them from the French position. To ascend the heights of Belle Alliance was the work of a moment, though in presence of the fire of 150 pieces of cannon. Some resistance was still offered by the remnant of the Imperial Guard, which was rallied by Marshal Ney, but it was quickly overcome. The reserve of the Young Guard, which was posted in a hollow between Belle Alliance and Monplaisir, was totally routed by the 52d and 71st regiments, who, after they had put the enemy to flight, separated, and running on two sides of an oval for a considerable way, met again, and thus cut off a great number of prisoners. The first line of the French was now thrown back upon and mingled with the second, in inextricable confusion; pressed by the British in front, and by the Prussians on the right flank and in the rear, corps of every varied description were blended in one confused tide of flight, which no person attempted to guide or to restrain. Baggage waggons, dismounted guns, ammunition carts, and arms of every description, cumbered the open field as well as the causeway, and with them were intermingled in thick profusion the corpses of the slain, or the bodies of the wounded, who in vain shrieked and implored compassion as the fugitives and their pursuers drove headlong over them.